SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Under clause 8 and clause 9 of the Public Distribution System Order, 2001, the total number of inspections conducted by the States and the Union Territories, in the year 2005-06 was 4,48,466. This is as per the report that I have got. Here, I think the hon. Member is referring to the FCI raids and their department. I have not got that information with me because the question that has been raised here is about fair-price shops. I have no hesitation in providing that information too. But there has to be a separate question.

*164 [The questioner (Shri Abu Asim Azmi) was absent for answer vide page 32]

Private hospitals

*165. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private hospitals, clinics and nursing homes as on 31st December, 2006; and

(b) whether Government would ensure that the existing hospitals, clinics and nursing homes operated by private players maintain minimum standards?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The data regarding number of private hospitals, clinics and nursing homes is not maintained centrally by the Government of India. Health is a State subject. About ten States have already enacted legislation for the registration and or regulation of private hospitals and nursing homes. Enactment of a central legislation for regulation of clinical establishments including maintenance of minimum standards is a priority area of this Government.

SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Sir, the Central Government has announced the National Health Policy in 2002. I would like to know whether the Policy has been formally implemented in all cases and if there has been any monitoring mechanism for implementation of the Policy.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, even though this question does not relate to the question which has been asked here, I would like to say that

the Central Government has framed the policy way back in 2001. It is a broad policy on what the Government should do in the future, in the next five to ten years. Government is trying its best to implement the policy in toto. But again, in due course of time, we will be having a second policy. The present Government is going have one more policy which will be for filling up the lacunae that are there in the existing policy as also for Future programmes.

SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Sir, this would be my second supplementary. I am asking this question because, as we know, all private hospitals, clinics and nursing homes charge very high for various types of treatment. My question is whether the Government would agree to impose compulsory conditions for them to ensure better treatment and fair charges for all types of treatment and free treatment for patients coming from BPL families. Will the Government then impose conditions specially for the corporate nursing homes and private hospitals which enjoy special financial and other facilities of the Government?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, as it is, the Government will not be in a position to ask the private establishments to treat them free of cost. But, for some of the private establishments, which have taken concessions from the Government like land, power and others at free of cost or at concessional rates, some of the States have a policy, like in Delhi or in other States, that these hospitals have to treat a certain number of patients free of cost, OPD patients and some other patients, the in-patients. But, unfortunately, these are not being monitored properly and again, it is a duty of the States to do it.

But, Sir, coming to the overall view of standardisation and quality of the hospitals, that is what this question mainly asks, the Government is now planning, Sir, to have a Bill introduced called the Clinical Establishment (Registration and Regulation) Bill, 2007, to regulate and to standardise all the clinical establishments, including hospitals, nursing homes, diagnostic centres, all the clinical establishments in this country, to have standards fixed in the near future.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.